

COPY NO. 20

STAFF STUDY

A Concept of National Intelligence Production
on the Far East

1 December 1949

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THE PROBLEM

1. To determine the principal considerations which, from the standpoint of United States security, should govern the planning and production of national intelligence on the Far East.

DISCUSSION

2. a. Assumptions

For the purpose of this discussion it is assumed:

(1) That United States security objectives and interests in the Far East are largely influenced by a world-wide struggle for power with the USSR.

(2) That, unless a basis for mutual accommodation is found, this struggle for power will result in:

(a) Armed conflict of major proportions; or,

(b) The gradual accumulation and exercise by

one protagonist, on terms short of war, of elements of power, including limited armed force, which eventually nullify the other's will and capacity to resist.

b. Significance of the Far East

The Far East is a region of large material and human resources possibly capable of being controlled and organized by an unfriendly power in such manner as to pose a crucial threat to the security of the United States. This possibility was recognized by Japan and planned in terms of the Greater

East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It is probable that Czarist

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SECRET

- 2 -

Russia long recognized, and is almost certain that the USSR now does recognize this possibility. Should the Far East region be eventually harnessed by the Soviet Union and employed in coordination with its Eurasian potentials, the United States would be confronted with a possibly decisive disadvantage either in armed conflict or in a prolonged struggle on terms short of war. From the standpoint of United States security it is therefore essential to determine what measures are and can be applied by any power to gain control of the Far East, and what is the nature of the potentials to be controlled.

c. Control in the Far East

Most of the Far East is in a state of major political, social, and economic transition. Attendant disarrangements have permitted the growth of a general susceptibility to manipulation on the part of the region's predominantly illiterate and unsophisticated populations, subject to deprivation and uncertainty, and desirous of improving their conditions. There is, moreover, the particular susceptibility of those abler individuals who, released by the weakening of customary social mechanisms, seek expression, status, and power, and frequently identify their aims with nationalistic or progressive goals. Taking full advantage of these circumstances is a vigorous international communism admittedly devoted to

SECRET

SECRET

-3-

acquiring domination of the Far East as part of its objective of world domination. The dynamic nature of communism, its ability to exploit professedly nationalist movements, the constantly shrinking portions of the Far East not under its power, and the difficulty of retrieving, by Western democratic methods, any area once lost to it, all indicate the importance of estimating the remaining prospects for increasing or lessening control in the Far East by either side in the US/USSR struggle.

d. Potentials of the Far East

An assessment of the human and material potentials of the Far East is of continuing moment to whomever may hope to achieve a position of influence or control over all or parts of that region. On the basis of an enduring world struggle between the United States and the USSR, on terms short of war, the respective contenders must recognize and strive to control, within whatever limitations their principles impose, those elements of human and material power in the Far East which will ultimately help to weigh a world balance in their favor. Since, however, the threat of war always exists, it is more urgent to take immediate and continuing stock of existing potentialities for war of all or parts of the Far East. Of particular importance to United States security in this respect is the question of

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SECRET

-4-

the growth in the Far East of a comprehensive war-making complex independent from, but in support of other centers of Soviet power.

CONCLUSIONS

3. That the principal considerations which, from the standpoint of United States security, should govern the planning and production of national intelligence on the Far East are as follows:

a. Possibilities for control in the Far East, to include:

(1) Vulnerability of the Far East, area by area, to control (unfavorable) to the United States.

(2) Capabilities for the acquisition, exercise, and denial of control in the Far East by parties to the US/USSR struggle.

b. Potentialities of the Far East in War and Peace, including:

(1) The possibility of the formation of a comprehensive war-making complex in the Far East, independent from, but in support of other centers of Soviet power.

(2) The existence or emergence in the Far East of elements of power employable by the major contenders in a protracted world struggle on terms less than war.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. That the National Security Council approve the foregoing conclusions, or indicate necessary modifications.

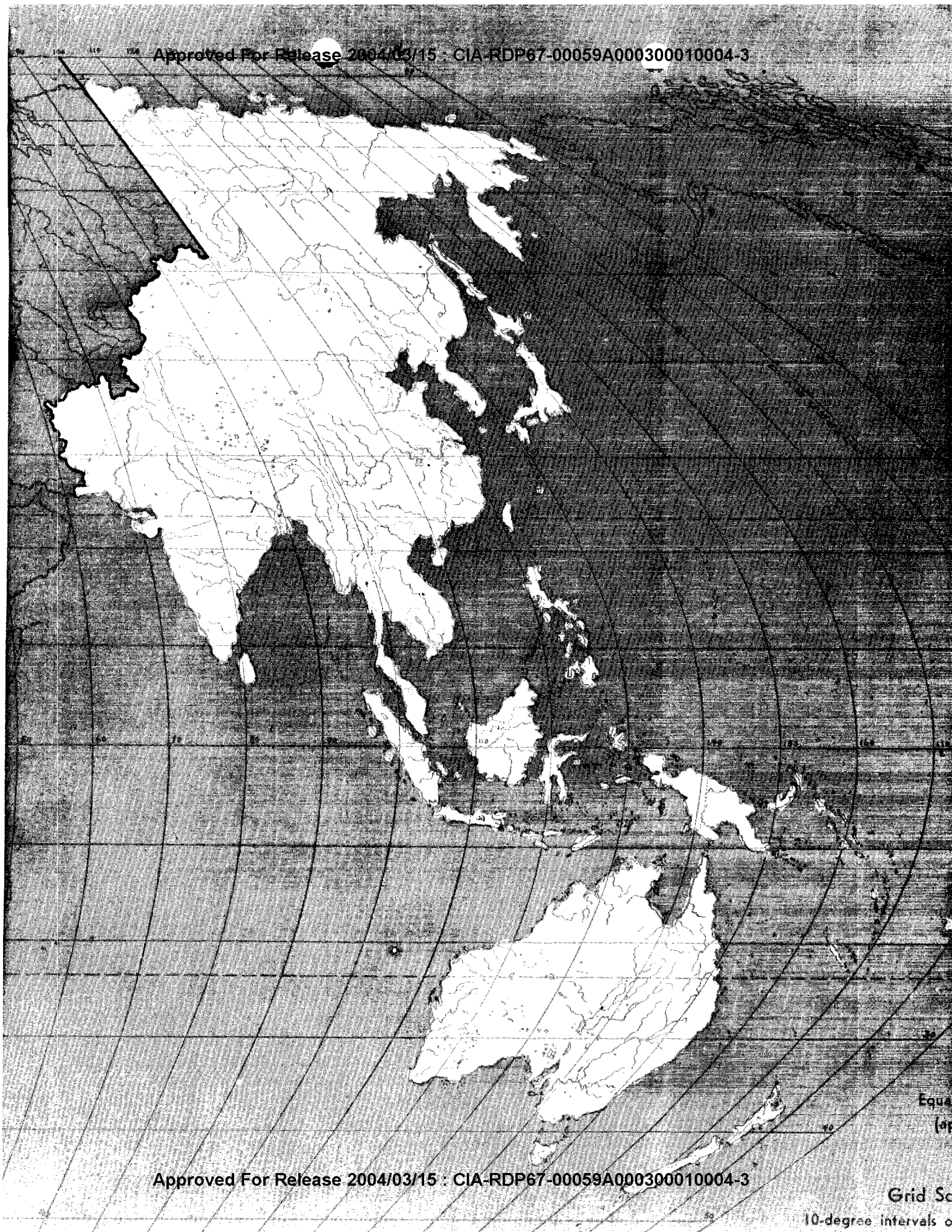
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-5-

5. That the Director of Central Intelligence be authorized to use such approved or modified conclusions as the basis for developing, in collaboration with the Intelligence Advisory Committee, a comprehensive plan for national intelligence production on the Far East.

NOTE: The attached map portrays in white the Far East as the term is used in this study.

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